



**JOHN H. LYNCH**  
Governor

# State of New Hampshire

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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April 13, 2006

The Honorable Dorcas Hardy, Chairman  
White House Conference on Aging Policy Committee  
4350 East-West Highway, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Bethesda, Maryland 20814

Dear Chairman Hardy:

Congratulations on the success of the 2005 White House Conference on Aging.

I have reviewed the material your office sent me about the conference and am pleased to see that we are in agreement on so many issues regarding our aging citizenry.

I met with the New Hampshire delegation before the conference. I indicated my strong support for the underlying values they spoke of such as: aging being viewed as a meaningful stage of life, not a disease; community support and concern for our aging citizens; and inclusion of our elderly in civic engagement, work opportunities and other meaningful activities in the community. We identified some of the specific resolutions that we felt were important considerations in New Hampshire. Those included strengthening Medicare and Medicaid, promoting innovative models for non-institutional long-term care, ensuring transportation options for our seniors, improving recognition, assessment, and treatment of mental illness and depression, and attaining adequate numbers of skilled professionals who are culturally competent and specialized in geriatrics. All of these were included in the top ten resolutions adopted by the WHCoA.

Here in New Hampshire, there is a strong commitment by all the stakeholders that we will come together to plan for an improved aging experience for all our citizens. That will include expanding our home and community-based care options, developing a stronger transportation system throughout the state, and enhancing our current mental health system to provide greater supports for seniors. My staff is working closely with the Department of Health and Human Services to look at changes to our Medicaid system that will include the integration of mental health, wellness, substance abuse, and primary care as well as a statewide care coordination model.

In September of 2006, I convened a group of over 150 citizens from all walks of life to take on the challenge of reforming healthcare in New Hampshire to ensure that all our citizens have access to quality, affordable healthcare. The Citizen's Health Initiative is comprised of individuals representing healthcare providers, businesses, elected officials, department heads, and members of the academic community. Together they will work over the next 10 years to guarantee that the citizens of New Hampshire live in a place where the economic, social, cultural, and bureaucratic barriers that make our system of health care unstable and unreliable are

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removed. I believe this goal will enhance all of our quality of lives, and this will be especially true for our aging citizens.

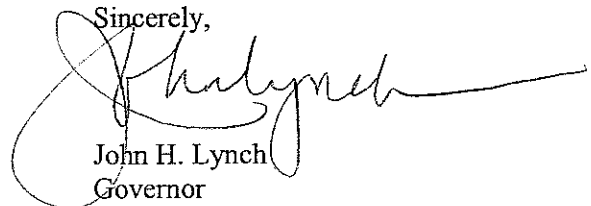
As we actively work on integrating our state and local delivery systems in New Hampshire, there are significant national level resolutions and strategy recommendations from the WHCoA, which are important to our state's future efforts and success. These include:

- Developing a national coordinated, comprehensive LTC Strategy;
- Preserving and strengthening Social Security and Medicare;
- Without block granting Medicaid, eliminating the need for waivers, to increase our state's flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Funding and supporting initiatives which ensure an adequate and well trained workforce;

Our White House delegation has offered to continue working with my office to help disseminate recommendations, implement strategies and obtain grass root supports for the strategies developed in Washington. In addition, I will be contacting our congressional representatives in Washington, for their assistance and coordination in making necessary changes on the federal level.

Again, I applaud the work done at the WHCoA. The theme of the 2005 conference, "The Booming Dynamics of Aging: From Awareness to Action," is an appropriate one as we see the arrival of the baby boom generation. Never before have we seen these large numbers of citizens entering the later stages of their lives. It is incumbent on all of us to address this changing dynamic now to ensure that our elders are valued and respected for all they can give back to us. New Hampshire will move forward. I plan to meet with our delegation shortly to discuss our next steps and will continue to bring together all the stakeholders to take on this challenge.

Thank you again for organizing the successful White House Conference on Aging.

Sincerely,  
  
John H. Lynch  
Governor